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Coordination of development indicators in the context of follow-up to United Nations conferences and summits, including capacity-building

Report of the Rio Group on Poverty Statistics

Note by the Secretary-General

The Secretary-General has the honour to transmit to the Statistical Commission the report of the Rio Group on Poverty Statistics (Convener: Brazil), which is contained in the annex. This document is transmitted to the Commission in accordance with a request of the Statistical Commission at its thirtieth session.[1]

The Statistical Commission is invited to discuss whether the mandate of the group is focused and the objectives are clear and attainable. The Commission may also wish to comment on the proposals for future work.

Notes

[1] *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1999, Supplement No. 4* (E/1999/24), chap. I.B.

* E/CN.3/2000/1.

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Annex

Report of the Rio Group on Poverty Statistics

Purpose

The main objectives of the Rio Group on Poverty Statistics are to harness the experience and concerns of different groups and organizations in the world working on the measurement, interpretation and use of poverty statistics, especially when such work is being done by or in close contact with statistical offices. The identification of the indicators, methodologies and statistical sources being used should allow the preparation of a document or reports containing the state of the art in matters of poverty measurements, common procedures and best practices. Simultaneously, the most important difficulties could be identified and experts working with similar problems and topics could cooperate and thereby improve the quality and relevance of measurements.

Year organized

1996.

Participants

Countries

Argentina, Australia, Botswana, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Spain, France, India, Indonesia, Mexico, Nigeria, Peru, Portugal, South Africa, Turkey, Uruguay, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America.

Agencies

Centro Latinoamericano de Demografia, Economic Commission for Africa, Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, Statistical Office of the European Communities, Inter-American Development Bank, International Labour Organization, United Nations Latin American and Caribbean Institute for Economic and Social Planning, Pan American Health Organization/World Health Organization, World Bank, United Nations Development Programme, United Nations Population Fund, United Nations Children's Fund, United Nations Statistics Division.

Meetings

First meeting: Santiago, 7-9 May 1997

Second meeting: Rio de Janeiro, 13-15 May 1998

Third meeting: Lisbon, 22-24 November 1999

Topics considered

Analytical classification of poverty measurements under way by participants; absolute and relative poverty; objective and subjective poverty; poverty indicators and poverty statistics oriented towards policy design and monitoring; within absolute poverty, the poverty line and the unmet basic need methods; methodological and procedural issues more widely used within different measurements of poverty; most important challenges in which participants are working; statistical sources used for poverty measurements; work under way to improve timeliness and quality of sources and estimates; institutional agreements towards comparability of measurements in different regions.

Products

Papers and final reports of the three meetings can be consulted on the Rio Group's web site at:

http://www.ibge.gov.br/poverty/

Planned activities (information given before the Lisbon meeting)

Poverty line methodology: thresholds and multipliers; updating: consumption patterns changes; countries regions estimates.

Income measurements: in close coordination with the Canberra Group; equivalence scales; public social expenditures.

Unmet basic needs: thresholds definitions, aggregation problems.

Poverty policies statistics: identification of origins of poverty situations, relation with politics towards vulnerable groups.

Statistical sources: longitudinal surveys, simultaneous use of different sources.

Expected future products (dates)

Due to the fact that the Lisbon meeting will be held at the end of November 1999, an oral presentation will be made at the thirtieth session of the Statistical Commission, in March 2000.

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